

Education For All

DAKAR



UTTAR PRADESH
PROGRAMME OF ACTION

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Education For All ... Moves On

..... Towards Universalising Elementary Education

THE STATE :

Uttar Pradesh is the second largest state in the country extending over an area of 240928 sq Kms. According to Census (2001), The total population of the state is 166 millions (87.5 millions males and 78.5 millions females). As the most populous state, it is the home to 16 percent of India's population.

For the purpose of governance the state is divided into 17 divisions and 71 *districts. There are 298 tehsils and 809 blocks in the state.

There are broadly four stages of school education in UP., namely, primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary. The state follows a uniform pattern of school education, with 12 years of schooling, commonly known as 10+2 pattern at national level. The 'plus two' stage refers to classes XI and XII which constitute higher secondary stage (or Intermediate) in the state.

THE BACK DROP :

Enrolment data, increase in percentage of primary, upper-primary schools and number of teachers; literacy rates and stepped up expenditure on primary education provide supportive evidence that Uttar Pradesh has made significant strides and is on move to providing universal access to education. In 2001, about 238 million children were enrolled in primary and 77 million in upper primary schools, up from 132 million in primary and 44 million in upper primary in 1991, registering an increase of 80.3 percent and 75 percent. Number of schools increased by 55.2 percent and 108.99 percent at primary and upper primary levels whereas increase in teachers' number was observed to be 32.4 percent and 45.3 percent at the two levels during the preceding 10 years - 1991-2001. An impressive increase in literacy rate by 15.76 percent is observed when 57.36 percent literacy in 2001 is compared with 41.6% in 1991.

Table 1.1 : Literacy Rate and Number of Primary Schools (1951-2001)

Year	Literacy Rate (%)			Number of Schools (in thousands) (Govt.)	
	Persons	Males	Females	Primary	Upper primary
1951	10.9	17.4	3.4	31.98	2.86
1961	17.6	27.3	7.0	40.08	4.34
1971	21.7	31.5	10.0	62.13	8.79
1981	27.4	38.9	14.4	70.61	13.56
1991	41.6	55.7	25.3	77.11	15.07
2001	57.36	70.23	42.98	119.67	31.50

Source: Census 2001, Directorate of Education U.P.

Gross Enrolment Ratio, during this period, has increased by 25.2 percentage points at the primary (from 65 to 91.2) and 17 percentage points at the upper-primary (60.1 to 77.1). A mid-day meal programme is in place to provide nutritional support to primary children. Integrated Child Care and Education (ECCE) scheme seeks to relieve the girl child from the burden of taking care of younger siblings, thus helping retention. The drop out rate at primary has plummeted down to 32.9% at primary and 13.9% at upper primary level.

The state has set before itself, the task of achieving total literacy. The focus is on reaching the un-reached through innovative and alternative model of schooling. This means enrolling and retaining all children in the age bracket of 6-14 years up to class VIII level through the formal or the non-formal system without compromising on quality. This would imply the acquisition of functional literacy by all adults in the age group 15-35 through Total Literacy Campaigns and the Post Literacy Programmes.

Clarion Call for Change – Major Initiatives

The major interventions in the context of Uttar Pradesh covering late eighties through nineties and extending into the millenium are :

Operation Black Board which aimed at improving the school enrolment and enhancing retention and learning achievement of children by providing minimum essential facilities in primary schools.

Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project has been designed towards; (a) improving access; (b) improving quality and (c) building institutional capacity to manage elementary education. Increase in enrolment, reduction in dropout rate and rise in achievement levels and functioning of the Village Education Committee (VEC) at an adequate level was reported in different studies. Classroom transaction in the project districts was found better.

District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) sought to (a) provide all children with access to primary education either in the formal system or through the non-formal education (NFE) programme, (b) reduce differences in enrolment, dropout rates and

learning achievement among gender and social groups to less than 5%. (c) reduce overall primary dropout rates for all students to less than 10%. (d) raise average achievement levels by at least 25% over measured base line levels and ensuring achievements of basic literacy and numeracies and a minimum of 40% achievement levels in other competencies by all primary school children

DPEPs planning process and decentralization of decision making has created a participatory ambience for achieving Universal Education. Researches support that the project was able to increase access, reduce dropout and repetition rate. The learning achievement levels of the children also indicated upward trend.

Moving Ahead : The New Perspective

The 10th Plan (2002-2007) has been characterised by a significant break through in attitudes and perceptions in education. Radical moves have been made by the government in wake of the Dakar Conference of the World Education Forum - 2000. The frame work of Action adopted in Dakar, identified the following six goals of EFA.

Dakar Goals :

GOAL-1 : *Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.*

GOAL II : *Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.*

GOAL-III : *Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.*

GOAL-IV : *Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.*

GOAL V: *Eliminating gender disparities in Primary and Secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015 with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.*

GOAL VI: *Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skill*

In the context of the Frame Work of Action for EFA adopted by Dakar conference 2000 the major step forward with renewed focus for action has been the launch of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. It is the flagship programme of the national government targeted to implement the fundamental right to free and compulsory education and achieve the goal of EFA by 2010.

Objectives of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan :

- *All children in school, Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) centre, 'Alternate School' 'back to school' camp by 2003.*
- *All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007.*
- *All children complete eight years of elementary schooling by 2010.*
- *Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education profile.*
- *Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary level by 2010.*

A major objective articulated by different initiatives was universal access to and completion of Basic Education.

Redeeming the Pledge : The Right of Every Child

Fundamental Right to Education

In its endeavor to build a just and humane society and as an aftermath of Dakar the Indian government through the Eighty sixth Constitutional Amendment Act, 2001 has made the right to elementary education a fundamental right. The same Act has substituted Article 45 (Directive Principles of the State Policy) to read "The State shall endeavor to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years".

Well Begun, Half Done

- *The Constitutional enactment for the right to education demonstrates the necessary political will and administrative resolve of the country/state to achieve UEE and eradicate illiteracy.*
- *By making education a fundamental right the state government has been mandated to focus on the special needs of the under-served and unserved population.*
- *Panchayat-Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the wake of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment, provided an opportunity to bring about effective devolution and decentralization of authority for planning and management of elementary education to give effect to constitutional enactment.*
- *Free and compulsory education will make a visible dent on child-labour, population, health as well as economy.*
- *To fulfil the obligation of the Act the state government charges no tuition fee provides free text books, mid - day meal to all children and scholarship to marginalised social groups.*

Preschool Education : Expanding the Access

Early Child Care Education is a crucial input in the strategy of human resource development and achieving universal Elementary Education. It is widely recognised that learning begins at birth, not with entrance into primary school. Pre-school education is seen as a holistic approach designed to address children's needs and foster nutrition, health, cognitive and socio-psychological, moral and emotional development of the child. It has been looked upon, also, as compensation for early childhood deprivations at the home front. Recent focus is on preventing problems rather than on 'compensating' for them once they develop. The ECCE seeks to provide an appropriately stimulating environment and play based experience appropriate to the developmental needs of children.

Early Childhood Care And Education

AIMS

- *Frees girls from sibling care responsibilities and enables them to attend school regularly.*
- *Facilitates school readiness among preschool age children.*

STRATEGIES :

- *Convergence mode-strengthening ECE in ICDS, through training, material support, synchronization of timings of Anganwadi Centres and Primary Schools.*
- *Multipronged approach for increasing awareness of the importance of proper nurturing during pre-school years drawing plans of action at the local, regional and state levels.*

IMPACT :

- *Transition of children from ECCE to primary school influences enrolment positively.*
- *Synchronized timings contributes to girls' attendance in Primary School.*
- *Increased confidence and participation in activities by children coming through pre-school education.*
- *Greater community involvement and increased demand for pre-school education.*

The acknowledged relevance of preschool education toward universalisation are two fold-firstly, it frees from sibling care responsibilities and enables them to attend school regularly; secondly, it facilitates development of maturational and experimental readiness among children to adjust better to primary curriculum.

Shishu Shiksha Scheme launched under U.P. Basic Education Project sought to strengthen the pre-school component. The scheme is implemented primarily in convergence with ICDS. It operates through Anganwadis. The Anganwadis run for two hours while Shishu Shiksha Kendra run for five hours. Convergence of services and avoiding duplication are the guiding principles. Major components of ICDS are Nutrition, Health, ECE, and pre-school education.

Thirteen percent of children in the age group 0-6 are covered under ICDS programme while approximately 5% are covered through private sector and other schemes. According to census 2001, total number of children in 0-3 age-group are 12802695; total number of children in 0-6 age-group are 30485802 and children covered under ICDS are 3182520.

The main features of the Early Child Care Education initiatives are Synchronizing the timings of the ICDS centres/Anganwadis/Shishu Shiksha Kendra with that of the primary schools; Relocating ICDS centres to or near the primary school; Encouraging play way experience and appropriate conducive environment to meet their developmental needs etc.

State Targets

- *It is envisaged that there would be 3,20,000 centres covering about 70% of the children in pre-school age-group by 2007.*
- *Expansion of 'pre-schooling' facilities for children about to enter primary school in all blocks as also in urban slums for every thirty children with community involvement.*
- *Community based innovative models for ECCE would be experimented and promoted.*
- *Play-way, child-centered approaches with curriculum based on stories, songs, toys, games, puppetry, dramatization etc. will be reinforced further.*

Strategy

- *Continuity of curriculum from the pre school stage to the primary stage will be ensured.*
- *Community based innovative models for ECCE would be experimented and promoted.*
- *Play-way, child-centered approaches with curriculum based on stories, songs, toys, games, puppetry, dramatization etc. will be reinforced further.*
- *Advocacy : To ensure developmentally appropriate play-based programme in ECE. An appropriate climate and a strong parent body would be developed.*
- *Strengthening of ECCE -primary linkage : Linkage between Early Child Care Education and primary education would be strengthened in both operational and pragmatic terms.*
- *Partnership with private sector : A synergetic public - private sector partnership would be built up to achieve the objectives of Education For All.*

Reaching the Universal Access : Achieving the Goals

Universal Elementary Education has been accepted as a goal since 1950. It implies universal access, retention and achievement of children in classes I to VIII. Concerted efforts towards UEE have resulted in manifold increase in institutions, teachers and students. Primary enrolment rates have steadily increased over the past five decades. Gender and sectional gaps in enrolments level are narrowing down, albeit gradually. But there exists a yawning digital divide between those who have access to and those who have not. There is a big backlog of out-of-school children in the age group 6-14.

The state targets universal enrolment of all children, including disadvantaged children, provision of a primary school within 1.5 kms. walking distance and facilities for non-formal education for school dropouts, working children and girls who cannot attend formal schools, and improvement in the ratio of upper primary schools to primary schools, to the extent of 1:2.

The dropout rates have shown a declining trend during the last decade. Dropout rate I – V is 32.9% while for upper primary it is 13.9%. Despite significant achievement in UEE, there are severe gender, regional, sectional and social class disparities in UEE. There is a significant proportion of students' dropout, and others quite large in number are out of school children. Toward reaching universalisation, dropout rates in classes I-V and classes VI-VIII need plumbing down to less than 10% and dropping further to zero by 2007 and 2010 respectively.

One of the thrust areas of UEE has been the effort to improve learning achievement of children both in primary and upper primary classes, mainly through the programme of Minimum Level of Learning. Achievement of MLL by almost all children at the primary level and introduction of the concept at the upper primary stage with focus on quality is the sine-qua-non of realising universalisation.

Access : Reaching the Unreached :

Three-fourths of the out of school children belong to socially marginalised groups. Others, constitute minority community children, urban deprived children.

belonging to linguistic minority; children of migrated families, children of poor families, disabled children and hardest to reach group.

It is proposed that 17.81 lac children belonging to the age bracket 5-6 years will be enrolled in formal primary schools and centres running under Education Guarantee Scheme. Others 11.97 lac in the age group 7-10 years will be joining Alternative Schooling Centers/Bridge Course. The rest 10.78 lac in the age group 11-14 years will be in the Upper Primary Schools/Alternative and Innovative Education Centres. All the 40.56 lac children will be brought to the fold of education.

It is imperative that education to fulfil its potential as a decisive intervention towards social quality must be within reach of all. A direct spin – off this needs strengthening the supply side. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) aims to provide universal enrolment by the year 2003. During 2003-04 3111 primary (1.5 km. distance, 300 population) and 5353 upper primary (3 km. distance, 800 population) schools are proposed to be opened. An increase of 32.4% during last ten years in the strength of teachers at primary level enables a teacher pupil ratio of 58:1 which reflects insufficiency in teacher supply. The Govt. of Uttar Pradesh has hit upon an innovative scheme of appointing Shiksha Mitras to meet this shortage.

Shiksha Mitra

In order to bring pupil-teacher ratio to 1:40 and enhance achievement levels of pupils Shiksha Mitras (Para Teachers) are appointed by the Village Education Committees on contract. The VECs with the devolution of powers, have been vested with considerable responsibilities. Shiksha Mitra will belong to the village in which the school is located. He will speak the same dialect, will have shared interest and will be aroused by ownership and accountability feeling. Minimum qualification is Intermediate. They will be inducted after a months training in content and methodology. Fifty percent of Shiksha Mitras will be females.

The work and efficiency of Shiksha Mitra have been subject of appreciation :

In Bahapur Primary School of Sareni Block in district Raibarelli – there were 52 children enrolled. Forty eight out of these were not coming to school. Bahapur is an Ambedkar Village. Majority belongs to schedule and backward castes. The VEC appointed a Shikshak Mitra who belonged to that village and belonged also to the SC category. He identified the children, contacted their parents and succeeded in bringing them back to regular schooling. He continued his efforts and involving the community and parents he could get all children in the eligible age-group enrolled. The school was marked for cent percent enrolment of local children with children enjoying school and showing an expected level of achievement.

Education of Socially Marginalised Groups

Educational needs of marginalised groups are given priority attention. In order to secure universal enrolment the SC/ST children would be provided: incentive in the form of scholarship, stipends to cover the opportunity cost of text books, stationary etc. appropriate schooling facilities in unserved habitations and difficult terrains. Mechanism for promoting awareness; greater representation in VECs/PTA; appointment of local teachers from the community, monitoring attendance, retention and achievement of children belonging to weaker section regularly; providing context-specific intervention in the form of hostels, providing locally relevant curriculum, using local dialect for teaching. convergence between different partners and setting up of Ashram or Residential schools-will be put in place.

Forging New Paths : Roping Working Children

The state of Uttar Pradesh has about 1.7 million working children mostly in the agriculture sector. A large number particularly girls are household workers. Other children no less in number form the work force in shops, restaurant, garrages and family occupations.

The Strategies for Working Children's Education focus on : Elimination of child labour, Back to school camps; Summer Schools, Bridge Courses; Mobilization of stakeholders – parents, children employees, PRIs, media; Winning over children by making camps/schools' environment attractive and joyful; Continuous emotional and community support.

BALSHALAS :

Balshalas are alternative schools where a pre school has been combined with a primary school. These centres cater to children in the 3-11 years of age who work along with their parents in stone quarries or as agriculture labour. Each Balshala has a Sahayika and a teacher for children above 6 years of age. Balshalas run near the work sight and acts as a school readiness programme.

Pioneering Change : Education of Children from Minority Groups

Researches show that participation of children of minority groups in elementary education is inadequate. Need to promote education among girls and literacy among adult women assumes particular importance when viewed as un-harnessed resource potential. Uneven ground across religious or social categories need urgent attention for leveling the field. The curriculum and programmes of Madaras and Maktab would need modernization with introduction of teaching of science and mathematics. Teachers would be given orientation for transacting mainstream curriculum.

JANSHALA : A Successful Experiment

Janshala programme is being implemented in Lucknow District to help universalisation of primary education. The focus is on providing child-friendly schooling to schedule caste, minority, working children, urban deprived – the poor, the slum dwellers and the disabled children. The programme is being implemented in eight blocks and all the 110 urban wards of Lucknow.

JANSHALA – A BETI Foundation Programme

The Janshala programme is being run by Government and UN agencies jointly in Lucknow district of Uttar Pradesh. Beti foundation is working with two wards of Lucknow – Hazratganj and Sadatganj. Thirty one primary and two upper primary, 21 slums and 148 mohallas are covered. The objective is to achieve universal enrolment and retention of children in formal schools by the end of academic year 2002-03 or earlier. Focus will be primarily on the age group 6-14 working and non-working children, not attending school and to improve their attendance, retention and performance. Total number of children mainstreamed into Government/Private schools up-to June 2002 is 1215. By March 2003 total number of children mainstreamed is 4740. 1260 Children are reported to be undergoing Bridge Course in Alternative Learning Centers under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

Uttar Pradesh Education Guarantee Scheme

EGS is available in villages or habitations where no school exists within one km. and at least 30 children in the age group 6-11 are there. Panchayats will select the place for running the center under this scheme. The control of the center will be in the hands of village panchayats. They will appoint teacher - the 'Acharyaji' on an honorarium of Rs 1000 p.m

Besides schools and teachers other imperatives for universalisation are : infrastructure, school equipment and a congenial teaching learning climate. The state has invested in each component by way of grants for TLM, school, library and capacity building. Early care education and integrated child Development Scheme as well as Education Guarantee Scheme have also traversed a significant part of journey on the road to universalisation. Despite efforts of quality improvement in formal schools certain categories of

children would not be able to participate in this system. Alternative Models of Schooling is needed for main streaming them. For girls with very low literacy pockets. Model Cluster Development Approach and 'Meena Campaign' have proved a boon. Janshala is another intervention to achieve universal involvement and retention in formal schools

Improving delivery system; community ownership; institutional capacity building, habitation-wise planning, thrust on quality; monitoring of attendance by the community and the VEC; Parent Teachers Association/School Chalo Abhiyan, Mahila Samakhya, Youth Clubs, Mother Teacher Association, Women Motivator Group/Meena Campaign and Kala Jatha are some of the current strategies for reaching universalisation.

Completing the Cycle : The Problem of Disadvantaged

The drop out at primary and elementary levels is a matter of serious concern. Poverty, unattractive schools, high private cost of education, sibling care, work in family occupation, wage labour, factories and field, sub-standard teaching, teacher absenteeism are some of the causes that the state has been dealing with.

Improving internal efficiency of the school, renewal of pedagogy and curriculum, effective supervision as also community/VECs incremental involvement; providing female teachers, upgrading Maktab and Madarsas are the measures being taken by the state to remedy the malady. Economic reasons of dropout are being addressed by providing targeted incentives. Private cost is sought to be revised by means of providing free text books, scholarships and mid-day meal. Suitable alternative education systems such as bridge course, remedial course, back to school are in place.

Involving community to motivate parents to bring children back to school, making teaching learning child-centered and joyful, developing local specific learning material, making school timings more flexible, providing positive and attractive school environment and devising more friendly evaluation system-need further and continued reinforcement.

A RAY OF HOPE : *Among thousand of deprived children who are victims of adverse circumstances 13 year old Sangeeta is just one of them.*

One day while visiting the Neher Kinara Mohalla centre in hazratganj, Lucknow ward the supervisor found the attendance at the JAN SHALA centre thin. She set out to the absenting childrens' house to enquire about their absence. The supervisor visited Sangeetas house whose younger brothers, Karan and Arjun were enrolled in the centre but had absented themselves that day. While talking to Karan and Arjun, she glanced upon little Sangeeta who was standing at one corner. It was found that Sangeeta was not enrolled in the centre. When she asked Sangeeta why she does not attend the centre, she said, I long to go to school, but my parents prevent me from doing so. They say that if I go to the centre who would do the work? When I see my younger brothers and sisters going to the centre, I have a greater urge to attend school.

The supervisor decided to have Sangeeta enrolled in the centre. She spoke to Sangeeta's parents and tried to convince them. They were tied down by their circumstances. It was hard convincing them at first but finally Sangeeta's parents agreed to send her to the centre with her brothers after she completed her work.

Sangeeta got up early in the morning to quickly finish her chores so that she could go to the centre. Thus, Sangeet's dream of educating herself came true.

** A case study of BETI foundation, Lucknow*

Urban Deprived – The Challenges Ahead

A large number of children are deprived of attending school because of poverty. Only few children are covered through incentives. Enrolment rates show a definite relationship with house hold income. Many remain out of school for economic reasons. To rope them back into the mainstream of formal education Shiksha Ghars have played a significant role. The strategies would be : *Revamping incentive delivery system; Preparing educational plans for urban slums; Relocation of school nearer to slum or poor habitants; Remedial classes for first generation learners; Greater non-profit involvement of private sector.*

PRATHAM

"Every child in school" Pratham Mumbai has extended its initiatives to Allahabad and Lucknow also. It runs school based programme designed on the understanding of the local context. It is serving pre-school children through child care centers; out-of-school children (those never been to school and drop out) through Bridge Courses and main streaming them to National Open School; Working Children; Out reach programme targets working children and children in difficult circumstances and in-school children through remedial education and computer assisted learning programme.

SHIKSHA GHAR

The Shikshaghar is an alternative education center to cover out of school children of 6-11 years age. The centers are operational for four hours daily for a minimum of 300 days in a year. A center has a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 25 children. The children use formal school text books. Teachers are selected on the basis of qualities like sensitivity towards children, story writing, story telling and planning activities.

Other Hard-to Reach Groups

Some children are left out despite all interventions. Landless labourers or families move out to look for work as wage labourer on brick kiln sites, construction sites, road repair, agriculture and other labour intensive seasonal work. Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education Scheme would be pushed into service to address to the education needs of the hard-to-reach children. Other options are : Back to school camp and Balika shivir (Girls' Camps).

The Strategies to reach are : *Evolving mechanism to set up seasonal schools. ; Identity card to children of migrant families to facilitate entry into schools at different worksites; Organising Bridge Courses, Seasonal Hostels and Mobile School; Residential Camps, Multi-grade Centers and community-based schools for unserved habitations.*

Alternative Education Programme for Working Children

The programme is in operation especially in child labour dominated districts such as Firozabad, Moradabad, Meerut, Bulandshahar, Etah, Jaunpur and Mirzapur. In total 992 centres (2001-02) Alternative Education Centres (AE)/EG Centres have already been opened in these districts. About 38300 working children/child labourers (boys:20200;girls:20166) have been enrolled at these centres. Nearly 9550 such children were enrolled in National Child Labour Project (NCLP) schools. Out of these 47550 children 5572 have joined the main stream of education

Towards Integration of the Disabled

The goal of UEE warrants that all children with disabilities be placed at par with other children and included in the formal or informal system. In U.P. children with special needs comprise 5-10 per cent of the population. The State of Uttar Pradesh tries to provide access to children with special needs to primary education through integrated education. The immediate intent is to integrate children with mild or moderate

disabilities. The Persons with Disabilities Act (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation Act, 1995) came into force on the 1st of January, 1996, ensures provision of free education to children with disabilities by appropriate local authorities. research activities for designing and developing new assistive devices, teaching aids, etc. setting up of teachers training institutions to develop trained man power for schools for children with disabilities; and perception of comprehensive education scheme providing for transport facilities, supply of books, etc. This act provides for compulsory access to school to every disabled child. It stipulates also for free education up to the age of 18 years.

To achieve this objective, the following approaches and interventions will be made :

- Appropriate environment would be provided and, a policy of zero rejection rate would be adopted so that no child is left out;
- Inclusion of disabled children will be based on a wide range of options, including regular schools, special schools, open learning system, open schools, home based education, itinerant teacher model, remedial teaching, part time classes and community rehabilitation.
- All disabled children would be identified through surveys and micro-planning and formal and functional assessment would be conducted.
- As far as possible, every child with special need would be in regular school with the necessary support services.
- All children requiring assistive devices would be provided with aids and appliances.
- Support services like physical access, resources rooms at cluster level, special equipment, reading material, special educational techniques, remedial teaching would be provided.
- Intensive teacher training would be undertaken to sensitize regular teachers on managing children with special needs.
- Linkage with NGOs will be established.
- Parents of children with disabilities would be given counseling to develop life skills in them.
- Architectural barriers in schools will be removed for easy access.
- Interventions to be implemented in convergence with other schemes and other departments.

Developing Gender Sensitivity : En route to Equity

Women and young girls, all over the world, carry a historic burden of inequality, visible in every aspect of their lives. The persistent low educational participation of girls has slowed down the pace of national development and resulted in skewed attainment of development indicators. If education has to fulfil its potential as a decisive intervention towards social equity, it must move beyond literacy percentage. It is imperative to create an environment where in girls, women, working children, disabled persons and those belonging to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and minorities are enabled to come together to explore their situation and act to bring about change commensurate with their strengths and capacities. Their educational status reflects the larger realities of their lives. It is being increasingly recognized that while UEE is the ultimate goal no strategy can succeed without addressing gender and class dimensions especially. The Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project emphasized the focus on girls education. There after the District Primary Education Programme has made female literacy rate a selection criterion for project districts and set goals of reducing gender disparities in enrolment, retention and learning. Continuing in the same vein, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan reiterates the need to focus on girls education, to equality of educational opportunities and eliminate gender disparities.

Census 2001 reveals 42.98% female literacy against 25.31% in 1991 while registering an increase of (17.67%) as compared to (15.27%) increase at the national level. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for girls increased from 10.8% in 1951 to 90.8% in 2000-2001, drop out rate for girls in the state declined from 60% in 1991-92 to about 30% in 2001. State has exempted girls from payment of tuition fees upto graduate level. Other measures, besides overriding concern and social engineering, for promotion of girls' education include provision of scholarships, free text books, attendance incentives, construction of toilets for girls and increasing proportion (50 %) of women teachers in primary schools.

A concrete step taken by the Government of Uttar Pradesh in the direction of providing equal educational opportunities to girls (6-14 years) is the launching of the Balika Shiksha Mission in 1999. The Mission covers both the primary and upper primary levels of education. The Government of Uttar Pradesh has since 1999 delegated the

management of Basic Education to the Panchayati Raj Institutions in a concerted effort to decentralize, establish local accountability and encourage local elected bodies to manage and execute basic education programmes.

Forward looking policies have not precipitated clearly discernable change at the ground level although participation of girls at primary level has improved and girls' enrolment has been outpacing that of the boys – the gender gap in achievement continues.

Challenges Towards Educating Girls : Need for Child Friendly Schools

The reasons for non-enrolment and dropout of girls are complex. Various factors have deterred the rate of growth in girls' participation in elementary education-hesitation on the part of certain communities to send girls to school; withdrawing them from school as they attain puberty; distance; safety considerations; parental indifference of first generation learners; cost of educating girls, opportunity cost of educating them, sibling care; working as wage labour; absence during harvesting season, family functions and marriages; supporting family occupation and factors within the school, like toilets for girls; lack of boundary wall, location of school, and absence of female teacher and insufficiency in number; lack of sensitivity among teachers towards issues that impinge upon girls' education.

The environment of such schools which neither encourage girls nor is able to bring out the best in them, need to put in lot of efforts and initiatives.

Primary education is not simply a matter of having every child enrolled in school. Once enrolled, the child must stay in school till he/she completes the cycle. Creating 'child-friendly' schools is thus of critical importance of achieving universal primary education, for increasing quality and education as well as gender equity.

There are some natural barriers- like distance to school, lonely path leading to schools, forests, streams/rivers, seasonal vagaries of floods which further aggravate the problem of retention of girls in primary schools.

The variations in the situation of girls across districts, blocks and clusters are pointers to the need to focus on area specific problems and issues. These variations need to be taken into account while planning strategies to address the issue of girls education. While generic strategies applicable to all girls in the districts are important, there would have to be certain specific strategies to counter the diverse acute situations faced by girls in certain pockets to enable them to join the school.

Marching Ahead : Initiatives for Change

A number of initiatives were pressed into service.

***Non-formal education** had been running till March 2001 for out-of-school children in the 6-14 years age group left out of the ambit of education. It has now been replaced by **Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education** . The scheme provide for extending access to small and unserved habitations. A new feature is making community management of such centers mandatory.*

***Mahila Samakhya** was designed to mobilize and organize marginalized rural women for education by creating an environment for learning. The centrality of education in the struggle to achieve equality is an important focus of Mahila Samakhya. Education in Mahila Samakhya is understood as a continuous process of gaining the consciousness and ability to critically deal with one's environment and society. Women are enabled to question, analyse, think, speak fearlessly and do from a position of strength. Impact is visible. Women are learning why problems exist and how to resolve them.*

With a view to augment efforts towards improving the basic education in general and girls education in particular, the Govt. of Uttar Pradesh undertook a number of projects and programmes. Operation Black Board, started in 1987-88 to provide basic minimum facilities in elementary school, has now been integrated into Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The programme sought to upgrade primary schools in low female literacy blocks by providing additional women teachers and teaching learning equipment. The District Primary Education Programme has taken further the initiative for girls' education. The programme has been launched in low female literacy districts. Gender has been built into planning and management, pedagogical improvement, girls' education and community mobilization. Women's participation in VEC has been influential in focussing attention on the needs of girls.

Strong Gender Focus

Gender Coordinators have been appointed at the state and district levels. At the village level, representation of women in the Village Education Committee has been made mandatory. Women have been mobilized, in some cases through convergence with programmes like Mahila Samakhya, Gender sensitisation of all functionaries is a core and continuing activity.

Gender reviews of learning material and the overhaul of textbooks have been completed in the state. Supportive activities like Early Child Education have also been addressed, thereby freeing girls from the responsibility of sibling care to enable them to attend school. Appointment of women teachers has received priority.

To reach working girls, minorities and other marginalised groups, Alternative innovative schooling has emerged as an effective intervention. Opening of new schools within reach of habitations, gender review of learning materials, overhaul of text books has also had a tangible impact on girls enrolment and retention. But there are gaps yet to be met at primary level.

This programme has evolved innovative and other interventions that have responded to the needs of women and girls and they are Mahila Shikshan Kendras, Bal Kendras and Mahila Sanghas

Low female literacy and low girls enrolment clusters were identified for intervention by Model Cluster Development Approach (MCDA) which is unique in Uttar Pradesh. To improve enrolment and retention Mother Teacher Association (MTA), Parent Teachers Group and Women Motivator Groups (WMGs) have been constituted and oriented. Enrolment drive and Tahrao Parikrama (retention drive) are being organised. An evaluation study of MCDA has found the strategy contributing significantly to the enrolment and retention of girls where this intervention was tried out. There are in total 1146 MCDA centers in U.P..

The Model Cluster Development Approach :

Specific pockets and population sections in many districts of Uttar Pradesh showed very low literacy rates specially among SCs and minorities. To deal with the severity of the problem Model Cluster Development Approach was conceived. Through this approach attempt are being made to improve girls participation in primary education. Clusters are identified on the basis of low female literacy rate, poor enrolment, retention of the girls; the dominance of minority SC/OBC population; cluster having 10-12 village; presence of some active and motivated women's groups. Evaluation study of MCDA reveal significant impact of the MCDA in accelerating the pace of enrolment and retention in the clusters studied.

Enthusiasm Unlimited !

Khana baad ma banayo (Cook the food later) ... are abhi tum chakki peesti ho, jaldi chalo school mein ! (Oh! you are still grinding the mill ? Come quickly to the school) ... are calls given to the village women by Aangna (45 years) and Jaidevi (42 years) who are trying to collect the women for a meeting. Soon women begin trickling out of their homes to participate in the meeting. Enthusiasm of this kind, for education, was unknown among women of their age. Their motivation came mainly from the Maa-beti mela.

At the mela, a women's parliament was held under MCDA in Gram Sabha Tikradawoodpur of Nyaya Panchayat Begumganj in Hardoi district. At the women's parliament Aangna was appointed the District magistrate and Jaidevi, the Gram Pradhan. During this role play, they began feeling a significant change within themselves. When fellow villagers address them as DM Sahab or Pradhanji, they not only feel good, but a sense of responsibility energise them. Their efforts have seen three girls, Shema, Resham and Babita, in school.

In order to accelerate the pace, girls enrolment and retention in primary and upper primary schools 3214 Meena Campaigns and 800 Meena Manch under SSA were organised for primary and upper primary school functionaries.

Meena Paves the Way

Strong resistance to girls' education was faced in one of the hamlets in a village (Bhikhupur) in Maharajganj district covered by the Model Cluster Development Approach . Girls' attendance was persistently low even after the mobilisation efforts initiated by DPEP. In fact, many of the activities proposed under the approach got diluted because of community disinterest. At one of the VEC meetings it was decided to organise a Meena Campaign. Necessary arrangements were made and the date and venue of the show were widely publicised. As a reminder, two days prior to the show, further publicity drives were undertaken.

The initial response was very discouraging . The programme personnel made efforts to draw in more people for the show. After a delay of an hour or so pre-screening discussions were held to elicit community views on girls' education . As anticipated very negative views were presented and education of girls appeared to be a non-issue for the viewers.

... Contd.

After noting the points that emerged, the film was screened. Meena's acts and parrot's support were read through. Soon the audience began commenting on Meena's role. Once the film was over, discussions were initiated on the importance of girls' education in the light of the film they saw. There was a visible softening of attitudes, and that girls also need to be educated. There were others who clearly expressed their desire to see their daughters become like Meena.

Two weeks later, the Head Teacher enthusiastically talked of changes in the people's attitude towards girls' education. The VEC Chairperson also reported the discernible desire of villagers for setting up an Alternative Schooling Centre.

On the way out of the village, the Gender Co-ordinator happened to meet Ramlal, who thanked her for screening the Meena films. Both his daughters have since been enrolled in the village school.

Latest initiatives for girls education are - Education Guarantee (EG) and Alternative Innovative Education (AIE) schemes. Under the new EGS and AIE, flexible strategies for out of school including EGS schools, Bridge Courses, Back to School Camps, Residential Camps for out of school girls have been envisaged. Investment has been stepped up and quality issues are being stressed.

Fulfilling Commitment : Future Action Plan

The thrust of female education received further fillup from the National Policy of Empowerment of Women, introduced in 2001, which emphasizes equal access to women and girls, reduction of gender gaps, achievement of sectorial time targets in existing policies and development of gender sensitive curricula.

Experience in the sector has shown that large omnibus UPE / UEE programmes can significantly impact girl's education. The large reach of such programmes ensures that strategies can reach a larger group in short periods of time. Specific strategies to bridge gender disparities in enrolment and retention of girls would be : Emphasis on backward pockets; marginalised communities – hardest to reach and those in the grip of socio-cultural taboos; TLC to raise the demand for education among women - further, Navodaya Vidyalayas, women level - women collectives, awareness building campaigns about the value of girls' education; provision of Early Child Care and Education Centres, incentives for girls' education; free text books and materials, free uniforms by NGOs, free transport by NGOs; mid-day meals, flexible timing of schools;

Maa - Beti Melas and Women's Parliament :

It has been considered useful to organise women on the issue of girl's education. Two interventions, viz., organisation of Maa Beti Melas and womens parliament, have been tried out.

These have tried to bring together mothers of out-of-school girls along with their daughters and expose them to a variety of issues related to education of girls. A fair is arranged with the help of the teachers and VEC members. Mobilizing the target women to attend the fair is one of the main tasks. Motivational rallies are organised with the help of teachers and school going children to inspire out of school children to join school.

These melas are organised for:

- 1. creating awarness about the importance of girls' education,*
- 2. educating mothers about the necessity and significance of girls' education.*
- 3. putting in place a functional relationship between the teachers and parents.*
- 4. drawing the attention of teachers towards the problems faced by girls.*

Specific strategies in the context of schedule castes and schedule tribes besides the above would be : location of new schools in SC and ST habitations, admission of SC/ST children at older ages, preschool centres to prepare children for formal schools. incentives for educating SC and ST children to be dovetailed with development programmes; health checks for students and medical care; scholarships / stipends to meet all costs of schooling,

So far as minority communities are concerned, Muslim girls, by and large are denied the opportunity of formal schooling for reasons imposed by culture / tradition such as 'Purdah' system which demands their seclusion. Therefore parents would have to be convinced of the value of a formal education and equally important to involve local religious leaders. Until conducive conditions are created for Muslim girls to enroll in regular schools, alternative strategies will have to be sought. This could include the teaching of secular content – science and mathematics; extension of the hours spent at the 'Anjuman' and 'Maktab' and introducing formal learning inputs. This would entail provisions of trained female instructors belonging to the community to impart formal education to Muslim girls within their own milieu as also the training of Maktab/ Madrasa's teachers in the content and method of main stream courses.

Several strategies to prevent dropout of girls will be reinforced e.g. monitoring attendance by the community, regular microplanning exercise to identify the number as well as the reasons of dropouts, follow up of dropout girls to bring them back to school either through camps or through bridge courses, organizing retention drives to put pressure on parents and the school etc. Opening the multi-stream residential higher secondary schools may return dividend in the form of boost to girls' education.

Community Mobilisation for Girls Education

- *Participative processes enabling local communities to play active role in promoting enrolment and retention of girls and in school management.*
- *Mobilisation of women's groups, convergence with Mahila Samakhya.*
- *Institutionalization process through VECs, MTAs, PTAs and women Motivator Groups (WMGs).*
- *Representation of women ensured in VECs.*
- *Orientation and training-sensitization to girls' needs and development of a gender perspective*

Encouraging Outcomes But Still Further to Go

Project interventions, heightened interests and pro active measures coupled with deliberate and directed efforts of the State Govt. Significant change in the status of girls education in the context of primary education is visible. Much of the hill has been scaled but the remaining is no less arduous and precipitous. The two critical output indicators viz enrolment and dropout have been examined in the light of base line figures. and it was found that almost gender equity in primary schools has been achieved. It is encouraging that 96% girls are enrolled against 98% of the boys. However, the transition rate from primary to upper primary is found to be only 52% for girls against 77% for boys. This is the area of concern for the state and 100% transition of the girls from primary to upper primary has to be ensured by 2007 besides the transition of boys. The state has resolved to achieve the target under SSA.

Towards Quality And Innovation The Ultimate Concern

The elementary school system in Uttar Pradesh has grown in size consistently, achieving an enrolment of nearly 315 lakh (31.5 million). This obviously poses a major challenge not only for efficient management but also for mobilizing resources needed to maintain even a reasonable level of quality. Quality improvement in education is a complex question. It cannot be carried out on a turn key basis in a pre-specified time-frame. The Govt. of Uttar Pradesh to achieve quality has pursued a six fold strategy consisting of : (a) improvement in provision of infrastructure and human resources; (b) provision of improved curriculum and teaching learning material; (c) improving the quality of teaching-learning process through the introduction of child centered pedagogy, (d) attention to teacher capacity building; (e) increased focus on specification and assessment of learners' achievement levels; and (f) community participation and decentralized management.

Infrastructure

Most primary schools have been provided with libraries, mats and additional classrooms. Unprovided schools are still there many of them are upper primary. Under DPEP / Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan each elementary school is receiving Rs.5000 maintenance grant and Rs. 2000 as annual improvement grant and Rs.500 every year to teachers to develop TLM. The state has provided a primary school within a radius of 1.5 kms. and upper primary school with in 3 km. Education is one of the most important building blocks for a nation, serving as an instrument of economic and social change as well as development. Within this context the role of the teacher remains as critical as ever.

Teachers

Enormous increase in enrolment of students in both primary and upper primary levels has necessitated creating new posts of teachers and recruiting regular and para teachers (Shiksha Mitra and Acharyaji) to further reduce the ratio of teacher-pupil. To improve the quality of teachers Teacher Education Scheme was put in place.

Teacher Education Scheme

The scheme sought to restructure and reorganise Teacher Education through establishment of District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) to provide quality pre-service and in-service training to teachers and Adult Education / Non-formal Education instructors; upgrade selected Secondary Teachers Education Institutions into College of Teacher Education (CTEs)/Institute of Advanced Study in Education (IASEs); strengthen State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT); strengthen Departments of Education in universities, and offer Special Orientation Programme for Primary Teachers (SOPT).

To make resource support mechanism for teachers, the thrust areas in teacher education are : development and strengthening of teacher education institutes; training of teachers pre-service as well as in-service training of para teachers and qualitative up gradation of pre-service and in service and professional development of practitioners – teacher educators, managers and others. DIETs' intake capacity has been raised from 50 to 1000; entry level qualification is now graduation. To reduce inter district disparity in teacher supply Shiksha Mitras have been appointed by Village Education Committees in the ratio of 3:2 with 50 per cent females.

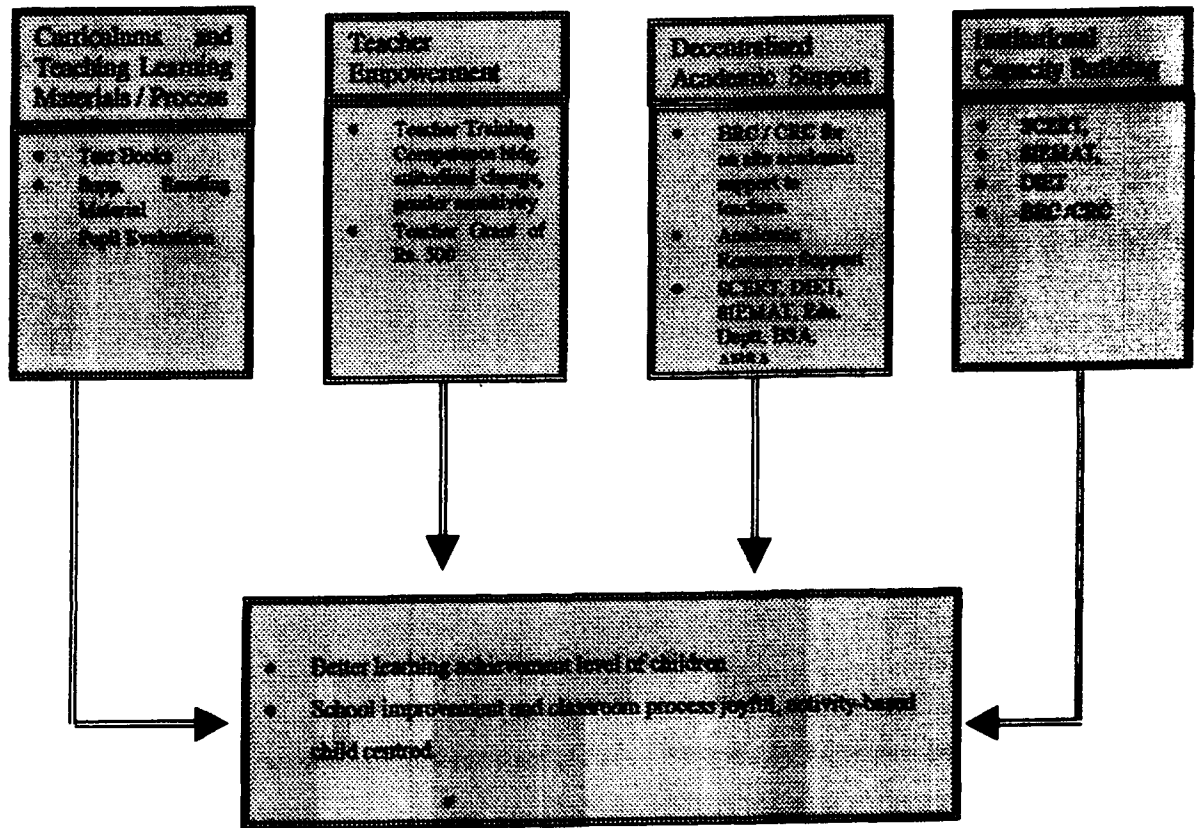
Strategies Adopted for Removing Mismatch in Teacher Supply

Special strategies have been adopted and are implemented for overcoming inter school and inter district mismatch in teacher supply.

- *District Core Team(District Project Office Personnel, DIET Faculty and Block and Cluster Coordinators) who were involved in identification of gaps.*
- *Inter-school and inter district mismatch is read from EMIS data.*
- *Deployment of teachers policy was made to be based on mismatch data.*

Quality improvement is the corner stone of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Uttar-Pradesh. The focus of most of its activities is on ensuring improvement in classroom process. This is being attempted through renewal of curriculum and TLM, teacher training, decentralized academic support and capacity building of institutions responsible for quality aspect. Participatory approach, the curriculum and teaching learning material including text books, teachers' hand books facilitate interaction between teacher and the child to promote quality learning.

Route to Quality Improvement



Learning to Learn : On Road to Quality

Uttar Pradesh has taken care of emphasis on skill of 'learning to learn', essential levels of learning outcomes for each curricular area and working with an expanded understanding of 'learning' as skill, quality, attitude and value.

Text books were prepared with a view to facilitate a two-way interaction between teacher and child; promote self and peer group learning; make teaching activity-based and child-friendly; make them gender bias free in religious, social and cultural aspects; make them attractive; relate them to childrens' learning and living and avoid information over burden.

The handbooks provide teachers an insight into the new pedagogy and an understanding of the underlying spirit in the preparation of new text books. Efforts have been made to make the teachers' guides user friendly so that teachers do not shy away from using them. A total of 14 teachers guides have been developed for classes I to V.

Academic Support : A Critical Input For Teachers

As an input to quality education Uttar Pradesh has created sub-district level academic support structures – the BRC/CRC. So far 809 Block Resource Centres (BRCs) and 8814 Nyay Panchayat Resource Centres (NPRCs) at the cluster level have been established and provided with necessary inputs for their effective functioning. These units with regular interaction with the DIETs and schools are providing regular academic support and services through mentors (DIET Faculty) to the schools in pedagogical and school-based management areas. Besides this, the capacity of state level institutions such as State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE), State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMAT) has been developed to impart training to address the issues related to pedagogy, action research as well as planning and management of EFA.

Teacher Planner

A teacher planner has been developed to guide the teacher to transact lessons to a plan that is in sync with the learning milestones developed for children in the curriculum. By design it enables the teacher to access the extent to which it has been possible to teach what she / he was meant to teach in particular time cycle.

School Grading: An Innovative Approach

In school grading, the schools are rated on a scale and are awarded any of the grades A, B,C, or D. The grading is done jointly by NPRC and BRC coordinators and DIET mentors. The Assistant Basic Shiksha Adhikari (ABSA/Block Education Officer) finalized the grade accredited to the school. The Parametres for grading include : physical infrastructure, Teacher performance, classroom environment, learning environment, seating arrangement, proper use of text books and teaching learning material, time utilization, teachers' communication skills and attitudes, children participation in classroom and implementing the evaluation and feed-back mechanism for pupil assessment.

State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMAT), U.P., Allahabad

State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMAT) Uttar Pradesh is a state level institute in the area of Educational Planning, Management, Research and Training. It is an autonomous organization registered under Societies' Registration Act, 1860 established in 1995. It was founded under the Basic Education Project (BEP), Uttar Pradesh. On the completion of the BEP, Government of Uttar Pradesh has taken it over for funding and support. SIEMAT, U.P. is fully functional and plays its crucial role in capacity-building for educational-planning and successful school management.

To achieve the objective of quality education the SIEMAT U.P. has been organising the following important programmes : (a) capacity building of all 105 thousand head teachers of the state; (b) orientation programmes of block education officers of the state to meet emerging challenges; (c) capacity building of all support structures i.e. DIET, BRC/CRC; (d) capacity building of distt. and divisional educational officers to make effective supervision and to provide necessary support to schools.

Studies show that teachers' motivation is closely tied to quality of teaching and the quality of instruction improve when teachers are given a role in making a pedagogical decisions and in shaping plans for school.

The SCERT U.P. has been organising several capacity building training programmes for teachers, head teachers as well as for supervisory and supporting staff either directly or in cascade mode.

Distance Education for Teachers' Capacity Building

With the establishment of an extensive institutional network, continuous up gradation of knowledge and skills cannot be done effectively in view of the perpetually expanding system of schools and teachers. With this in view modern technology and distance education mechanism has been put in place to reach out school teachers on a continuous basis. Teachers and teacher educators are put together through tele-conferencing. IGNOU, NCERT, Space Application Centre are collaborating in the process.

The DIETs in each district besides providing academic support and services to BRCs/NPRCs, prepare teachers for the whole districts. In-service teacher training programmes are being organised regularly to bring about attitudinal change and reinforce child-centered pedagogy.

Pupil Evaluation : Focus on Learners' Achievement

There is a particular need for simple assessment methods that can be used in school with few resources. The teacher needs a system to evaluate the cognitive and co-cognitive aspects of the child's development. The SCERT, along with the State Resource Group (SRG) and experts has developed a Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) system based on these concepts. A progress report card of each student along with identified parameters has been designed. External testing at the class-V level and periodic internal testing are also proposed in the design. A teachers' hand-book and work plan along with formats for recording progress has been developed.

Quality – Its Visibility

The focus of Basic Education in the state is targeted at actual learning acquisition and outcome rather than exclusively upon enrolment

Baseline studies on the achievement level of students on basic skills of numeracy and literacy were conducted for classes – II and V through Mid Term Assessment Study (MAS) and Final Assessment Study (FAS).

In accordance with the state curriculum frame work for primary and upper primary levels, Govt. of U.P. has targeted learners achievement as Mastery level concept in each subject, especially in language, mathematics and essential life skills which reads –

"Eighty percent children should attain level of eighty percent content required for master level concept in each subject."

Educational Technology

The State Govt. is concerned that each DIET must have its own work station in which about 10 computers may be inter-connected together with a net-work. Computer education at elementary level (particularly upper primary level) will be accorded priority to make students familiar with computers. For this three levels of computer education - computer literacy, computer aided learning and computer-based learning are envisaged.

Data Management

Educational statistics and data are analysed and utilised in the process of planning and designing training programmes. The analysis of data collected through EMIS provides basic information block-wise, village/habitation-wise, school-wise, gender-wise and class-wise number of students. To work for quality, information regarding dropout rate, repetition rate, completion rate, number of non-attending school-children contributes a lot.

Synergetic Partnership with the Private Sector

The state has already sought the collaboration of private sector in improving the quality through effective management of the system and development of locally relevant teaching materials.

Media, Advocacy and Communication

Communication and media strategy is proposed in the Tenth Five-Year Plan. It will be designed to sensitize, mobilise and motivate the stakeholders, opinion leaders and the public for achieving the goal of UEE. The emphasis would be on effective use of folk-tradition and local art forms to spread the message of education.

Action Research : Encouraging Innovations

The SIEMAT, U.P. Allahabad and SCERT, Lucknow have been organising Action Research workshops with the purpose of developing capacity of teachers head teachers through BRCs and NPRCs so that they may be able to diagnose the problems faced by them and may seek appropriate solutions of the problems.

Action Researches Outcomes

SIEMAT had organized an Action Research programme initially in the four districts of U.P. (Aligarh, Allahabad, Pauri Garhwal and Saharanpur) for the qualitative improvement of the primary education and capacity building of the educational functionaries working in the area of primary education. This capacity building among the BRC/NPRC coordinators, Head Teachers and Teachers of primary schools was felt essential to enable them to identify the various problems which create hindrance in the school system resulting in the deterioration of the academic standards.

One hundred and ninety-one action researches were completed by BRC/NPRC coordinators, head teachers and teachers. Of these, twenty action researches were published by SIEMAT

Towards Self Governance : Empowering Self Government

In a historic decision bottom-up management has been conceived. The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) is real and effective. The PRIs have been armed with statutory powers to shape the elementary education according to the EFA vision.

The state of Uttar Pradesh has laid down the functions of Zila Panchayat, the Municipalities and Gram Shiksha Samiti (Village Education Committee – VEC). The VECs have been assigned the responsibilities of managing schools at the grass root levels. The functions of VECs are three fold – supervisory, executive and financial. Establishing, administering, controlling and managing basic schools in the panchayat area

Constitution of VEC

- *The Pradhan (Head) of the Village Panchayat, is the chairperson.*
- *Three guardians of students of Basic School (of whom one guardian must be a woman) will be the members.*
- *The Head Teacher of the basic school situated in the Village Panchayat and if there are more than one such schools, the senior most head teacher will act as member secretary.*
- *Guardians of SC/ST children will find representation in the VEC.*

The State Government has delegated the following additional tasks to VEC.

- *Construction and repair of schools*
- *Administer school funds for school infrastructure, consumables, mats etc.*
- *Appointment of Shiksha Mitras (para teachers) for formal primary schools.*
- *Appointment of Acharyaji under the Education Guarantee Schemes (EGS)*
- *Appointment of instructors under the non formal education / alternative schooling.*

Community on Move - Mobilization and Participation

It goes without saying that participation and continuous involvement of the community in planning and implementing educational programmes are essential for around development of children. To translate this philosophy into reality, VECs have already been constituted in all villages (total VECs : 51884 in 71 districts). In order to promote community participation in primary education the 41119 VECs representatives have been trained so far. The VEC is expected to play a major role in bringing positive attitudinal change in people and to play an important role in mobilizing the community by : bringing out-of-school children into formal schools; retaining children in schools, especially girls and children from disadvantaged groups; bringing children with disabilities into main stream, supervising and ensuring that children in the age group of 3-6 join the ECCE centres for pre schooling; encouraging and supporting out-of-school children especially girls and working children to join alternative education centres, organising training programmes for VEC; MTA and PTA for awareness of rights and duties in respect of school management. VECs have been involved in identifying accessible place for setting up schools, alternative education centres and appointment of para-teachers where they are needed.

Each district has drawn up calendar of activities to be undertaken by VECs for community mobilization and 'School Chalo' campaign under enrolment drive which is there since 1998 to encourage enrolment, especially of girls.

Unique Community Support – A Thrilling Experience

Lalitpur is one of the districts of Uttar Pradesh. Primary school Dhanwara, a Parishadiya school, falls within the jurisdiction of Jakhaura Block of this district. This primary school was initially like other Parishadiya primary schools having minimum essential infra-structure for its functioning. The village has been fortunate in having an enthusiastic and active Pradhan who takes keen interest in improving the working of the primary school. Under his efficient guidance the Village Education Committee has done a lot to mobilize the requisite resources and facilities to make the school extremely attractive and its working more effective.

A visit to primary school Dhanwara gives the impression that it must be an educational institution of secondary level. In all, the school has twelve rooms and each room is equipped with the facilities of electricity and furniture of good quality. The school campus is marked with beautiful flower-pots and well-decorated walls and the institution has the facilities of safe drinking water and separate toilets for boys and girls. It has a good play-ground and adequate materials for games and sports. Most of the villagers along with their Village Pradhan have been contributing substantially for the beautification of the school and the betterment of the quality of education. The discipline of the school is exemplary for other institutions of the district.

A remarkable feature is the regular meaningful inter-action between the Head Teacher and the Village Pradhan every month. The efficient leadership of the Village Pradhan and active cooperation of villagers are responsible for the distinguished achievements of the school.

Looking Ahead...

A variety of inputs coupled with great care and thought has laid the path to improvement in quality, placing markers at pertinent points as guides along the path. There is an increased sense of involvement to be seen at all levels and a die hard resolve to make things happen. The mood is upbeat to conquer the heights in quality improvement. Beginning seem to have been made with some evidence of change in teaching practices actually taking place in the schools and children showing improvements in achievement levels. The need of the hour is to forge ahead and consolidate the gains steadfastly with special focus to class room process, intensive content cum training to primary and upper primary teachers; effective leadership training to head teachers; making school evaluation on the basis of specific parameters, making

supervision more effective by providing feed back and guidance to schools; ensuring carrying out of the assignment and home work by the students and checking by the teachers; motivating teachers for making adequate use of teacher guides and formation of state level dynamic management structure and state resource group in different functional areas of quality improvement which would respond to the challenges and stimulate the system for quality improvement.

Community Ownership of Primary Education

- *The villagers of Rampur in Jakhaura block in Lalitpur district had been concerned about the fact that there was no primary school in their village. While some children joined the school in the neighbouring village, many remained out of school either as drop outs or as non-starters. Not willing to let things be as they are, a few motivated villagers mooted the idea of constructing a school building with community contributions. This proposal was followed by the decision to construct a six roomed school building. Some of the villagers made monetary contributions and others had put in their time and labour. After the school building was ready, it was donated/handed over to the Government, with a request to run the school. Now Rampur, not only has a school, but is able to serve children in unserved villages in the neighbourhood. The villagers regularly monitor the school, classroom environment and teachers' attendance.*
- *A section of the villagers in Thamwara village in Jakhaura block of Lalitpur district, pointed out the need for desks and ceiling fans in the classrooms of the village school. In their opinion, such infrastructural facilities were imperative for a congenial learning environment in the school. The teachers expressed their helplessness in the matter. The issue came to the notice of the head teacher, Shri Nayak, who raised the issue at a general meeting of the village. He expressed the need for community contributions. The villagers responded to his appeal by providing desks and fans in all the four classrooms. One of the affluent villagers, donated school uniforms to the children of weaker sections and six wheel chairs to physically challenged children.*

Education for life skill :

People on the Move

An underlying aim of education for all is to eliminate illiteracy. In them not only a future force is denied but the future itself is denied to them. The basic learning needs of youth and adults are diverse. Variety of delivery systems including National Literacy Mission and the State Literacy Mission Authority have traversed a long distance by Total Literacy Campaigns while also fine tuning the strategies for linking literacy with skill up gradation and helping it slip out of the impossible to enter into an achievable zone where access to printed knowledge, life skills and technologies to better the quality of lives would be at hand. Adult and Continuing Education target teaching the art of living and making education a life long process.

The Dakar Framework of action, especially in respect of adult literacy is –

- Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adult are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skill programmes.
- Achieving a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

Making Literacy Reach Million

Million of learners in the 15-35 age-group have been reached in India through "total literacy campaigns" at the district and block levels. Social mobilisation is the key to the success of the Total Literacy Campaigns. At the village level, communities themselves are in charge of mobilisation efforts. Special efforts are made to reach women and members of marginalised groups.

The expanded vision of basic education entails moving beyond the focus on primary schooling to out-of-school education catering to the Basic Learning Needs of All Children, Youth and Adults over their life time. The trailblazing experiments in literacy have impacted positively in developing literacy numeracy and general life skills for adolescents and adults necessitating consolidation of the gains.

The literacy campaigns are area specific, time-bound, cost-effective and outcome-oriented and delivered through voluntarism. They are implemented through Zila Saksharata Samiti . The campaigns are initiated with appropriate environment building activity and door to door literacy survey. Literacy programmes comprise of three components :- Total literacy campaign, Post Literacy Programmes and Continuing Education .

After completion of Total Literacy Campaign (TLC), Post Literacy Programmes are launched to mop up the left over illiterates (through remediation, application of literacy to actual life)to consolidate the gains of literacy acquired during TLC, and to enable the neo-literate to develop abilities for professional skills and self-learning. Presently 56 districts have already been saturated by TLC while the campaign is going on in 15 districts . The PLP is being implemented in 31 districts and Continuing Education in 25 districts.

NLM thrust areas highlighted :-

- Achievement of 75 percent literacy level by 2007 by addressing regional, social and gender disparities through total literacy, post literacy and continuing education programme
- Special attention to SCs/STs, low literacy district and women in 10th five-year plan
- Mobilization and organization of women into neo-literacy and self-help group
- Placing basic literacy, post literacy and continuing education phases into a learning continuum
- Zila Shaksharata Samiti to use grassroot participatory net work like youth cluster , Mahila Mandals, voluntary agencies and local self-government bodies – panchayats, cooperative and jan shiksha sausthan.

Continuing Education for Neo-Literates

The National Literacy Mission (NLM), besides emphasising other aspects of the programme, lays special emphasis on Post Literacy and Continuing Education for neo-literates so that they can be prevented from slipping back into illiteracy. The basic objective of the Post Literacy Programmes and Continuing Education is to provide opportunities of continuing education to neo-literates to facilitate retention of their literacy skills and continue their learning beyond elementary to be able to apply their

learning skills improving their living conditions and develop adaptive as well as positive behaviour to be able to deal effectively with demands and changes in every day life.

Continuing Education is a must for ensuring human resource development, creation of learning society, facilitate continued learning through a self-directed process and improve the quality of lives. The main thrust is on setting up of Continuing Education Centers (CECs) to serve as Library, Reading Room, Learning Center, Training Center, Cultural Center, Sport Center, Information Center, Charca Mandal, Development Center and other individual interest promotion programmes center. CECs are set up in a cluster of 8 to 10 with one of them designated as nodal CEC. Ideally there is one CEC for one village.

In terms of content, continuing education has been classified broadly into four categories;

→Equivalency Programmes designed as alternative education programmes equivalent to existing formal general or vocational education, →Income generating Programmes, →Quality of life Improvement Programme and →Individuals Interest Promotion Programme.

Open Learning

National Institute of Open schooling (NIOS) takes care of the educational needs of those who had to discontinue their formal school education because of one or the other reason.

NIOS took initiative by launching the Open Basic Education (OBE) programme with the objective of providing basic education to the neo-literate, as well as out-of-school adolescents, among others.

Achievements-

- 1. Integrated Project of TLC and PLP have been sanctioned in three newly created districts(Chandauli, Balrampur and Bagpat).*
- 2. 'Satyen Moitra Memorial Award' for Best Performing District in Total Literacy Campaign ' has been awarded to Aligarh district.*
- 3. State Literacy Mission Authority, Uttar Pradesh has been awarded for outstanding contribution in the field of literacy and adult education by National Literacy Mission in collaboration with UNESCO.*
- 4. Chitrakoot district has been selected for the award of certificate of appreciation on the international literacy day.*

Monitoring Programme For EFA

U.P. Education for All Project Board an autonomous body has been made the mission authority of EFA. The Chief Minister heads the general council while Minister of Education (Basic Education) acts as Vice President. The executive council is headed by Chief Secretary, Principal Secretary (Education) / Secretary (Basic Education) being Vice – Chairperson. The executive committee includes NGOs, social activists university teachers, Panchayati Raj representative and representatives of women's group. Full transparency and accountability are at the core of the programmes.

Monitoring is envisaged as a three-tier activity-monitoring at a local community level, at the district level and at the state level. The community - Village Education Committee (VEC) is empowered to ensure that the schools function effectively. The community monitoring system would be operationalized by assigning greater role to Panchayats.

The monitoring will be done on the basis of following indicators.

Monitoring Indicators For EFA

On ECCE

- *Gross enrolment in early childhood development programmes.*
- *Percentage of new entrants to primary grade-1 who have attended some form of early childhood development programmes.*

Enrolment Indicators

- *Gross Enrolment Ratio*
- *Net Enrolment Ratio*

Transition Indicators

- *Student passing primary and upper primary level of education.*

On Teacher Supply

- *The pupil teacher ratio.*
- *Appointment of female teachers.*

On School Efficiency

- *Repetition rate by grade*
- *Survival rate to grade V and VIII*

On Achievement

- *Percentage of pupils having reached at least grade V and VIII who master a set of defined basic learning competencies.*

On Literacy

- *Literacy rate of 15-35 yrs. age.*
- *Adult literacy rate*
- *Literacy gender parity index : ratio of female to male literacy rate*

